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A CHILD IN FLORENCE

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A CHILD IN FLORENCE

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1899

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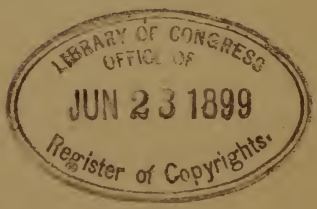

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GOING TO THE PARTY.

A CHILD IN FLORENCE.

CHAPTER I.

WE lived in that same Casa Guidi from whose windows Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poet-eyes saw what she afterward put into glowing verse. Casa Guidi is a great pile of graystone, a pile of many windows which give upon the Via Maggio and a little piazza, as the squares in Florence are called. Consequently it is lighter and brighter than are many of the houses in Florence, where the streets are narrow and the houses lofty.

According to almost universal custom, Casa Guidi was divided into half a dozen different apartments, occupied by as many families. Ours was on the second floor, on the side of the house overlooking the

piazza on which stood the church of San Felice. The pleasantest room in our apartment, as I thought, was a room in which I passed many hours of an ailing childhood; a room which I christened "The Gallery," because it was long and narrow, and was hung with many cheerful pictures. It opened into a little boudoir at one end, and into the *salon* at the other. The walls of gallery and boudoir were frescoed gayly with fruits and flowers and birds.

Here the sun streamed in all through the long, mild, Florentine winters; here I would lie on my couch, and count the roses on the walls, and the birds, and the apricots, and listen to the cries in the streets; and, if a procession went by, hurry to the window and watch it pass, and stay at the window until I was tired, when I would totter back to my couch, and my day-dreams, and my drawing, and my verse-making, and my attempts at studying.

I was fired with artist-ambitions at the age of ten; and what wonder, surrounded as I was by artists living and dead, and by their immortal works. It seemed to me then that one *must* put all one's impressions of sight and form into shape. But I did not develop well. Noses proved a stumbling-block, which I never overcame, to my attaining to eminence in figure-sketching.

The picture that I admired most in those days was one of Judith holding up the gory head of Holofernes, in the Pitti Gallery of Paintings. I was seized with a longing to copy it, on my return from my first visit to the Gallery. I seated myself, one evening, before a sheet of drawing paper, and I tried and tried; but the nose of Holofernes was too much for me. All that I could accomplish was something that resembled an enlarged interrogation mark, and recalled Chinese art, as illustrated on fans. I was disappointed, disgusted — but, above all, surprised: it was my first intimation that "to do" is not "as easy as 'tis to know what 'twere good to do."

In the midst of my futile efforts, a broad-shouldered, bearded man was announced, who having shaken hands with the grown-ups, came and seated himself beside the little girl, and her paint-box and pencils and care-worn face.

"O Mr. Hart," I cried, "do make this nose for me!"

Whereupon he made it, giving me many valuable suggestions, meanwhile, as to the effect produced by judicious shading. Still, I was discouraged. It was borne in upon me that this was not *my* branch of art.

"Mr. Hart," I said, "I think I would like to make noses *your* way."

"Would you? Then you shall. Come to my studio to-morrow, and you shall have some clay and a board, and try what you can do."

So the next day I insisted upon availing myself of this invitation. Mr. Hart was then elaborating his machine for taking portraits in marble, in his studio in the upper part of the city. He had always several busts on hand, excellent likenesses. His workmen would be employed in cutting out the marble, while he molded his original thought out of the plastic clay. There has always been a fascination to me in statuary. Mr. Ruskin tells us that form appealed to the old Greeks more forcibly than color. That was in the youth of the race; possibly, the first stage of art-development is an appreciation of form; in my case, I have not passed into the maturer stage yet. The rounded proportions, curves, and reality of a statue appeal to me as no painting ever did.

Nevertheless, I made no greater progress in molding than in sketching. I made my hands very sticky; I used up several pounds of clay; then I relinquished my hopes of becoming a sculptor. I found it more to my taste to follow Mr. Hart around the rooms, to chatter with the workmen, to ask innumerable questions about the "Invention."

It has been suggested that it was to this invention

PALACE IN FLORENCE.

of Mr. Hart's that Mrs. Browning referred when she wrote of —

> "Just a shadow on a wall,"

from which could be taken —

> "The measure of a man,
> Which is the measure of an angel, saith
> The apostle."

Mr. Hart wore the apron and the cap that sculptors affect, as a protection from the fine, white dust that the marble sheds: generally, too, an ancient dressing-gown. Costumes in Bohemia, the native land of artists, are apt to be unconventional.

It was a most wondrous thing to me to watch the brown clay take shapes and beauty under the sculptor's touch. I can still see him fashioning a wreath of grape-leaves round a Bacchante's head; the leaves would grow beneath his hand, in all the details of tendrils, stems, veinings. It seemed to me he must be so happy, to live in this world of his own creating. I hope that he was happy, the kindly man; he had the patience and the enthusiasm of the genuine artist, — a patience that had enabled him to surmount serious obstacles before he reached his present position. Like Powers and Rheinhart, he began life as a stone

cutter. I wonder what dreams of beauty those three men saw imprisoned in the unhewn stone, to which they longed to give shape, before Fate smiled on them, and put them in the way of doing the best that in them lay!

In spite of the fact that neither Painting nor Sculpture proved propitious, a great reverence and love of Art was born in me at this time. Possibly a love and reverence all the more intense, because Art became to me, individually, an unattainable thing. I remember passing many hours, at this period, in what would certainly have been durance vile, had I not been fired with a lofty ambition. Mr. Edwin White was sketching in a picture which called for two figures — an old man and a child. The old man was easily obtained, a beautiful professional model of advanced years; but the child was not so readily found. I was filled with secret joy when it was suggested to me that *I* should be the required model. I was enchanted when the permission was given me to perform this important service. This was before the time of the long illness to which I referred in the beginning of this paper. The spending every morning for a week or so in Mr. White's studio implied the being excused from French verbs and Italian translations. What a happy life, I thought, to be a model! I envied the

MICHAEL ANGELO.

beautiful old patriarch with whom I was associated in this picture. Kneeling beside him, as I was instructed to do, I thought what bliss it would be to be associated with him always, and to go about with him from studio to studio, posing for pictures.

There must be an inspiration for artists in the very air of Florence. The beautiful city is filled with memorials of the past, painted and carved by the masters passed away. I suppose that artists are constantly aroused to the wish to do great things by the sight of what these others have accomplished. Then, too, the history of the past, the religion of the past, are such realities in Florence. The artist feels called upon to interpret them, not as dead fancies, but as facts. The mythology of the Greeks and Romans meets one at every turn. I, for one, was as intimately acquainted with the family history of Venus, of Ceres, of Pallas, of Persephone, as with that of Queen Elizabeth, of Catherine de Medici, of Henrietta Maria. Nay, I was more intimate with the delightful elder set.

The heathen gods reigned sylvanly in the Boboli Gardens, and it was there that I formed a most intimate personal acquaintance with them. The Boboli Gardens are the gardens of the Pitti Palace, an immense, unlovely pile, the memorial of the ambition

of the Marquis Pitti, who reared it. He had vowed that he would build a palace large enough to hold in its court-yard the palace of his hated rival, the Marquis Strozzi. He was as good as his word; but in carrying out his designs he ruined his fortune. The vast palace, when completed, passed out of his hands into those of the Medici, then the Dukes of Florence. Afterwards it became the residence of the foreign rulers of Florence. When I remember the city, Austrian soldiers guarded the great gateway of the Pitti, and marched up and down the court-yards; and the showy white uniforms of Austrian officers were conspicuous in the ante-chambers and guard-rooms.

But behind the great palace, the fair Boboli Gardens spread away. There was a statue of Ceres crowning a terrace, up to which climbed other terraces — an amphitheatre of terraces, in truth, from a fish-pond in the centre — which commanded the city through which the Arno flowed. Many a sunny day have we children — my sisters and I — sat at the base of this statue and gossiped about Ceres, beautiful Mother Nature, and her daughter, who was stolen from her by the Dark King. Further down, on a lower slope, was a statue of Pallas, with her calm, resolute face, her helmet, her spear, her owl.

POSING

I remember that Millie and Eva and I were especially fond of this Pallas. I used to wonder why it was that men should ever have been votaries of Venus rather than of her. I have ceased to wonder at this, since then; but in those days I especially criticized a statue of Venus, after the well-known Venus of Canova, which impressed me as insipid. This statue stood hard by the severe majesty of Pallas, white against a background of oleanders and laurestines.

Then there was a second fish-pond, in the centre of which was an orange-island, about which tritons and mermen and mermaids were disposed. I can see their good-humored, gay — nay, some of them were even *leering* — faces, still. Soulless creatures these, we were well aware, and so were sorry for them. The immortal gods, of course, we credited with souls; but these — with the wood-nymphs, and bacchantes, and satyrs, that we were apt to come upon all through the garden, — these we classed as only on a level a trifle higher than that of the trees, and brooks, into which some of them had been transformed in the course of the vicissitudes of their careers.

Perhaps it is because the spirit of the old religion so took possession of me in that Italian garden, that to this day the woods, and the dells, and the rocks,

seem to me to be the embodied forms of living creatures. A Daphne waves her arms from the laurel-tree; a Clytie forever turns to her sun-lover, in the sunflower.

CHAPTER II.

THE two public picture galleries of Florence — the Pitti and the Uffizi — are on either side of the Arno. They are connected by a covered way, which runs along over the roofs of houses, and crosses the jewelers' bridge, so called because upon it are built the shops of all the jewelers in town, — or so it would seem at first sight. At all events, here are nothing but jewelers' shops; small shops, such as I imagine the shops of the middle ages to have been. But in the narrow windows, and in the unostentatious show-cases, are displayed most exquisite workmanship in Florentine mosaic, in turquoise, in malakite, exquisite as to the quality of the mosaic and the character of the designs in which the earrings, brooches, bracelets, were made up. As a rule, however, the gold-work was inferior, and the settings were very apt to come apart, and the pins to break and bend, after a very short wear.

Sauntering across this bridge, one passes, on his way to the Uffizi, various shops in narrow streets, where the silks of Florentine manufacture are displayed. Such pretty silks, dear girls, and so cheap! For a mere song you may go dressed like the butterflies, in Florence, clad in bright, sheeny raiment, spun by native worms out of native mulberry leaves. Equally cheap are the cameos, and the coral, that are brought here from neighboring Naples, and the turquoises, imported directly from the Eastern market, and the mosaics, inlaid of precious stones in Florence herself.

So we come out upon the Piazza, or Square, of the Uffizi. The Uffizi Palace itself is of irregular form, and inclosed by *loggiae*, or covered colonnades. In front of the palace stands the David of Michael Angelo, in its strong beauty. Michael Angelo said of this that "the only test for a statue is the light of a public square." To this test the David has been subjected for over three hundred years, and still, in the searching light of day, stand revealed the courage and the faith and the strength of the young man who went forth to do battle with the giant, "In the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel." And who shall say to how many of us Michael Angelo does not preach, across the centu-

ries, a sermon in stone, as we stand before his David? —as we recall what Giants of Doubt, of Passion, of Pride, we, too, are called upon to battle with in our day?

In a square portico, or *loggia*, giving upon the Piazza, is a statue of Perseus, another slayer of monsters, or, rather, a slayer of monsters in another realm. It was this Perseus to whom Pallas gave a mirror-shield of burnished brass, whom Mercury armed with an adamantine scythe, giving him also wings on his feet. It was this Perseus who slew the Gorgon Princess Medusa. In the statue, the fatal head of Medusa, with its stony stare, is held aloft by the warrior, who is trampling upon the headless trunk. This head had, in death as in life, the power of turning many men to stone, and was thus made use of by Perseus against other enemies of his. The subject of the stony-eyed Gorgon possessed, apparently, a curious fascination for artists. There is a famous head painted on wood by Leonardo da Vinci, besides this statue by Benvenuto Cellini, in the Uffizi.

How, as a child, I used to puzzle over the strange fable in both statue and picture! But, since then, I have had experience of Gorgon natures in real life; natures that chilled and repressed, stupefied all with whom they came in contact; and I wonder less at the

fable, and I pass the word on to you, that you may know, when unsympathetic surroundings chill your heart and blunt your feelings, and subdue your better self, that you are being haunted by Da Vinci's very Medusa, by Gellini's very Medusa, snaky locks, fixed eyes, impassive deadness.

Into the great Uffizi Palace: up the wide marble stairway, into the long gallery that opens into the immense suite of rooms hung with pictures; the gallery hung with pictures, too, and set with statues.

How I wish I could make you see with my eyes! How I wish I could be to you something more than a mere traveler, telling what *I* have seen! That long corridor, windows on one side, statues and pictures on the other, always seems to me like a nursery for love of art. At the far end are the quaint pictures of Giotto and Cimabue. Then the reverent, religious paintings of Fra Angelico. Oh, those sweet-faced, golden-haired angels! Oh, the glimpse into the land seen by faith, inhabited by shining ones! Oh, the radiance of those pictures! The gold back-grounds, the bright faces, the happy effect of them! The artists *believed* them with all their souls, as Ruskin has said; so they painted pictures which recall the refrain of Bernard de Cluny's Rhyme of the Celestial Country. Presently pictures by Perugino, Raphael's master, and

— quite at the other end of the gallery — the portrait of Raphael, painted by himself. This picture is on an easel, and stands apart. Are you familiar with Raphael's beautiful, calm, *young* face? It is a face which has passed into a proverb for beauty and serenity. A velvet cap is pushed off the pure brow; the hair is long and waving; the eyes are large and dark and abstracted. I always stood before this picture as before a shrine.

All the way down the gallery are statues and busts. There are the Roman emperors, far more familiar to me through their counterfeit presentments than through the pages of history. Augustus, Diocletian, Trajan: to us girls they were studies in hair-dressing, if in nothing else. Some of them with flowing locks, some with close, short curls, some with hair parted in the middle and laid in long, smooth curls, like a woman. Of such was Heliogabulus, and of such was Vitellius.

One morning — soon after we came to Florence — we started off upon a quest — through the Uffizi — Millie, Eva and I, and our elders. The object of our quest was no less a goddess than she called of the Medici.

I remember that we wandered down the long gallery I have described, and through room after room. It was the fancy of our mamma, and the uncle who was

taking care of us all, to find their way about for themselves. For instance: if we had been told that a certain picture, by a certain master, was to be found in a certain palace, we roamed in and out around the other pictures until *the* picture *revealed itself* to us. It was surprising how seldom we were deceived in this method of ours. We would pass by dozens of pictures by inferior artists, completely unmoved; then, suddenly, a thrilling vision of beauty would glow upon us, and we would acknowledge ourselves to be in a royal presence-chamber.

Such a presence-chamber is the Tribune in the Uffizi palace. We came upon many marble Venuses before we arrived in this Tribune, a large, octagon room, with a domed ceiling, blue, flecked with gold stars; but we passed them all by — until finally we entered the reverent stillness which is kept about the Venus of Venuses. We recognized her at once. There she stood, in that silent room, the light subdued to a judicious mellowness — beautiful with the fresh, smiling beauty of perpetual youth; beautiful with the same beauty that gladdened the heart of the Greek artist who carved her, hundreds of years ago; so many hundreds of years that the marble has in consequence, the rich cream-color of old ivory.

In this same Tribune hangs the portrait of a beau-

RAPHAEL.

tiful young woman, called the Fornarina. Of her only this is known, that she was the beloved of Raphael, and that she was the daughter of a baker in Rome. Fornarina means little bakeress, or, perhaps *we* should say, baker-girl. But *this* Fornarina might be a princess. An "ox-eyed Juno" princess, dark and glowing, with a serene composure about her that one remembers as her most striking characteristic.

Raphael's lady-love. Millie and I knew more about her than was ever written in books. Not reliable gossip — gossip of our own invention, but gossip that delighted our hearts.

Other pictures by Raphael hang here, too. How distinctly I recall them. How vivid are all the works of this great painter! The critics say that one who excelled in so many things, excelled also in *expression.* Yes. It is this which gives to his pictures the distinctness of photographs from life. They are dramatic. They take you at once into the spirit of the scene represented. They are full of soul, and herein lies the great difference between Raphael's works and those of other schools, the Venetian, for instance. The painters of Venice aimed at effects of color; Raphael used color only in order to express a loftier thought.

Are you tired of the Uffizi? Come with me, for a

few minutes, before we go, into the Hall of Niobe. Words fail me to relate with what mingled emotions of sympathy, distress and delight we children used to haunt this hall, and examine each sculptured form in turn. The story goes that Niobe incurred the displeasure of Diana and Apollo, who wreaked their vengeance upon the mother by killing her fourteen children. At the head of the hall stands Niobe, convulsed with grief, vainly imploring the angry brother and sister to show compassion, and at the same time protecting the youngest child, who is clinging to her. But we feel that both intercession and protection will be in vain. On the other side of the hall are her sons and daughters. Some already pierced with arrows, stiff in death; some in the attitude of flight, some staggering to the ground. It is an easy matter for the imagination to picture the supreme moment when. bereft of all her children, the mother's heart breaks, and she is turned to stone. The legend relates that that stone wept tears. Nor was it a difficult matter for me to take this on faith. What is more, many is the time I have planted myself before the very marble Niobe in the Uffizi, firmly expecting to see the tears flow down her cheeks.

So we come out upon the streets of Florence again.

Fair Florence, the narrow Arno dividing her, the purple Appennines shutting her in the Arno's fertile valley. Flower-women stop us on the streets, and offer us flowers. Flower-women who are not as pretty as they are wont to be at fancy-dress parties; they are apt to be heavy and mid-dle-aged, in fact, one of them, the handsomest of the band, has a scar on her face, and a tinge of romance attached to her name. It is whispered about that her lover's dagger inflicted the scar, in a fit of jealousy. Once I myself saw a look flash into her eyes, when something was said to offend her by a passer-by on the street, which suggested the idea that she might have used her dagger

La Fornarina of the Uffizi, at Florence.

in return. It was the look of a tiger aroused. And after that I never quite lost sight of the smothered fire in those black eyes of hers.

I used to wonder why I saw so few pretty faces in Florence. Moreover, how lovely the American ladies always looked in contrast with the swarthy, heavy Tuscan women. As a rule, that is. Of course, there were plain Americans and handsome Tuscans; but our countrywomen certainly bear off the palm for delicacy of feature and coloring. Still, the Tuscan peasant-girls make a fine show, with their broad flats of Leghorn straw; and when they are married they are invariably adorned with strings of Roman pearls about their necks. So many rows of pearls counts for so much worldly wealth.

I stroll on, stopping to look in at the picture stores, or coming to an enraptured pause before a cellar-way piled up with rare and fragrant flowers, such as one sees seldom out of Florence — the City of Flowers.

CHAPTER III.

ONE summer we lived in a villa a short distance outside the gates of Florence. For Florence had gates in those days, and was a walled city, kept by Austrian sentinels. That was the time of the Austrian occupation. Since then, Solferino and Magenta have been fought, and the treaty of Villafranca has been signed, and now, "Italy's one, from mountain to sea!" —

> "King Victor has Italy's crown on his head,
> And his flag takes all heaven with its white, green and red."

But then the Florentines bowed their necks under a hated foreign yoke, scowling when they dared at a retreating "maledetto Tedesco" (cursed German).

The phrase "white, green and red" recalls to me the fire-balloons we used to send up from our villa garden, on the summer nights of long ago. We had, for our Italian tutor, an enthusiastic patriot, who had

fought in the Italian ranks in '48, and who was looking forward to shouldering a musket soon again. It afforded him intense gratification to send the national colors floating out over Florence. Our villa was built on a hill-side, commanding a fine view of the Val d'Arno, and of the City of Flowers herself, domed, campaniled, spired. The longer the voyages made by our balloons, the higher rose the spirits of our Signor Vicenzo. He regarded these airy nothings, made by his own hands, of tissue paper and alcohol, as omens of good or ill to his beloved country.

I suppose he was a fair type of his countrymen intensely dramatic, with a native facility of expression. One notices this facility of expression among all classes. The Italians have an eloquent sign-language of their own, in which they are as proficient as in the language of spoken words. It is charming to see two neighbors communicating with each other across the street, without uttering a syllable, by the means of animated gestures. It seems a natural sequence that they should be a people of artists.

Such long rambles as my sisters and I and our maid Assunta took, starting from the villa! Assunta was the daughter of a neighboring countryman of the better sort, who cultivated a grape vineyard and an olive field, besides keeping a dairy. We had a way

of happening by in the evening in time for a glass of warm milk. Assunta's mother supplied our table with milk and butter daily, moreover; butter made into tiny pats and done up daintily in grape leaves, never salted, by the way; milk put up in flasks cased in straw, such as are also used for the native wine. Was it the unfailing appetite of childhood, or was that milk and butter really superior to any I have ever tasted since? What charming breakfasts recur to me! *Semele*, as we called our baker's rolls; a golden circle of butter on its own leaf; great figs bursting with juicy sweetness; milk.

How good those figs used to taste for lunch, too, when we would pay a few *crazis* for the privilege of helping ourselves to them off the fig-trees in some *podere* (orchard, vineyard), inclosed in its own stone wall, on which scarlet poppies waved in the golden sunlight, beneath the blue, blue skies. Am I waxing descriptive and dull? Well, dear girls, I wish you could have shared those days with me. Roaming about those hill-sides, my sisters and I peopled them with the creatures of our own imaginations, as well as those of other people's imaginations, to say nothing of veritable historical characters. We read and re-read Roger's *Italy*. Do you know that enchanting book? Can you say by heart, as Millie, Eva and I

could, "Ginevra," and "Luigi," and "The Brides of Venice"? I wonder if I should like that poetry now? I *loved* it then. Also, I date my knowledge of Byron to that same epoch. We children devoured the descriptions in "Childe Harold," and absorbed "The Two Foscari," which otherwise we would perhaps have never read. Byron was the poet of our fathers and mothers; but in these early days dramatic and narrative poetry was more intelligible than the mysticism of Tennyson and the Brownings, so enchanting to me now.

One evening, some friends who occupied a neighboring villa invited mamma to be present at the reading of a manuscript poem by an American poet, Buchanan Read. I was permitted to go, too, and was fully alive to the dignity of the occasion. Mr. Read was making a reputation rapidly; there was no telling what might be in store for him. The generous hand of brother artists in Florence all cheered him on his way, and accorded to him precisely that kind of sympathetic encouragement which his peculiar nature required. The group of interested, friendly faces in the *salon* at Villa Allori rises up before me as I write, on the evening when Mr. Read, occupying a central position, read aloud, in his charming, trained voice.

I remember that, in the pauses of the reading, Mr. Powers, who was present, amused one or two children about him by drawing odd little caricatures on a stray bit of note paper, which is, by the way, still in my possession. Doubtless Mr. Powers' reputation rests upon his statues, not his caricatures; yet these particular ones have an immense value for me, dashed off with a twinkle in the artist's beautiful dark eyes.

There was also present on this occasion a beautiful young lady, for whom Mr. Read had just written some birthday verses, which he read to us, after having completed the reading of the larger manuscript. Those birthday verses have haunted me ever since, and this, although I cannot recall a word of the more ambitious poem.

Mr. Powers had lived for so many years in Florence that he was by right of that, if by no other right, the patriarch of the American colony there. He and his large family were most intensely American, in spite of their long expatriation. His was emphatically an American *home*, as completely so as though the Arno and the Appenines had been, instead, the Mississippi and the Alleghanies. This was no doubt due to the fact that Mrs. Powers was preëminently an American wife and mother, large-hearted and warm-hearted. She never forgot the household tradi-

tions of her youth. She baked mince-pies and pumpkin-pies at Christmas and Thanksgiving, and dispensed these bounties to her countrymen with a lavish hand. Then, too, the Powers lived in a *house*, and not in an *apartment*, or, as we say, on a flat. The children ran up and down-stairs, and in and out their own yard, which lay between the dwelling-house and the studio, just as American children do. And in this genial, wholesome home an artist grew up in the second generation. A son of Mr. Powers is now making name and fame for himself in his father's profession.

It has been said that the beautiful face of the eldest daughter of this family is suggested in her father's "Greek Slave." I looked up to her then with the respect which a child feels for an elder girl, "a young lady in society." I can appreciate now and admire, even more than I did then, the extreme simplicity and unconsciousness which so well accorded with her grand, classic beauty. She was the good fairy at a Christmas Tree Festival, to which all the American girls and boys in Florence were bidden, on the twenty-fifth of December. We were all presented with most exquisitely made *bonbonnieres*, chiefly of home manufacture. We were feasted on doughnuts which brought tears to some of our eyes; dear

American doughnuts, that *might* have been fried in the land of the free. We had French candy *ad libitum;* but there was also on exhibition a pound or so of genuine American stick candy, such as we see by the bushel in this country, and which had been brought over from the United States by a friend recently arrived, at Mrs. Powers' special request. We examined this stick candy with patriotic enthusiasm. We ate little bits of it, and thought it infinitely better than our candied fruits and chocolate creams. Doubtless this little incident here recalled will account for the fact that I always associate peppermint stick candy with the flag of the Union. It is an unfortunate caprice of mind; but, nevertheless, the national stripes always rise before me when I see these red and white sticks.

I am inclined to the belief that exiles make the best patriots. We American children stood up fiercely for our own native land, whenever the question as to national superiority arose between ourselves and English, French, or Italian children, — especially the English. With these we fought the Revolutionary war all over again, hotly, if injudiciously. And I am confident that we had a personal and individual sense of superiority over them. No doubt we were endowed, even at that early age, with the proverbial national

conceit. Some one had told me that every American was a sovereign, and that I was consequently a princess in my own right. This became a conviction with me, and greatly increased my self-importance. How glorious to be the citizen of a country of such magnificent gifts of citizenship!

But to return to Mr. Powers. His statue of California was on exhibition at this time. This is, to my mind, the most noble and impressive of his works. The strong, resolute face, of classic outlines, and of the sterner type of beauty, bears a distinct resemblance to the sculptor's second daughter, although by no means a portrait. It has been told me that one of the fathers of our American church, traveling in Italy, suggested an important alteration in this statue. California originally carried in her hand a bar, supposed to represent a bar of solid gold. The idea occurred to the bishop that were this smooth bar — which might mean anything — made to represent a nugget of gold in the rough, the point of the story would be far more effectively told; and on this idea the bishop spoke. The sculptor was impressed directly, and with all the unaffected simplicity of real genius he thanked his critic for the hint. California now displays her symbolic nugget; and, moreover, about her head is designed a fillet of bits of ore in the rough.

AT THE PARTY.

The America of Powers is another impressive and beautiful female form. A vision of the sculptor comes before my eyes, standing in front of this statue, and talking it over with a party of visitors. Such a beautiful, simple-mannered man — with his mild dark eyes and serene face! He wore the usual blouse and linen apron, and the cap of the sculptor. He held his chisel in his hand as he conversed. Some of his audience did not agree with him in the peculiar political views he held. But Mr. Powers would not argue, and what need? Had he not preached his sermon in stone, and eloquently?

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